

Old Fashion Letters

Old-fashioned letters! How good they were!
And nobody writes them now;
Never at all comes in the scrawl
On the written pages which told us all
The news of town and the folks we knew,
And what they had done or were going to do.
It seems we've forgotten how
To spend an hour with our pen in hand
To write in the language we understand.
Old-fashioned letters we used to get
And ponder each fond line o'er;
The glad words rolled like running gold,
As smoothly their tales of joy they told,
And our hearts beat fast with a keen delight
As we read the news they were pleased to write
And gathered the love they bore.
But few of the letters that come to-day
Are penned to us in the old-time way.
Old-fashioned letters that told us all
The tales of the far away;
Where they'd been and the folks they'd seen;
And better than any fine magazine
Was the writing too, for it bore the style
Of a simple heart and a sunny smile,
And was pure as the breath of May.
Some of them oft were damp with tears,
But those were the letters that lived for years.
Old-fashioned letters! How good they were!
And, oh, how we watched the mails;
But nobody writes of the quaint delights
Of the sunny days and the merry nights
Or tells us the things that we yearn to know—
That art passed out with the long ago,
And lost are the simple tales;
Yet we all would happier be, I think,
If we'd spend more time with our pen and ink.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)